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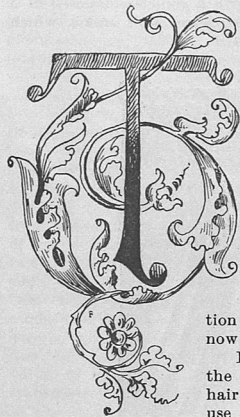
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THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER.

TRANSPARENCY PAINTING ON LINEN.

By W. WILLIAMS.



PAINTING THE TRANSPARENCY.

THE design having been correctly outlined on the muslin, the next process is the painting.

It will be seen, throughout this little Treatise, that we limit our observations to the peculiarities of the kind of art which we are considering. The broad principles which apply to art generally, equally govern transparency painting. With these, we have nothing here to do; it is to an explanation of the mechanism and peculiar manipulation of transparency painting, that we now address ourselves.

For the greater part of our work, the proper brushes are the flat hog-hair tools used in oil painting. The use of these brushes is generally so

well understood, as to require no precept; but there are effects producible in transparency painting, with great ease and success, by the adoption of certain ingenious methods of working; and these must now be considered.

It is often difficult, with a brush, to put in broad, flat tints of varnish color, in painting skies; because the brush leaves too much color where a mere tinting only is necessary. Hence, in delicate work, the loading of color is to be avoided; for, in such cases, if more than a simple indication of color be communicated, the work will appear coarse and heavy.

A small piece of very fine sponge is often used with advantage, to rub in broad, flat, and thin tintings for skies, distances, buildings, &c.

The sponge is charged with color diluted with varnish; and, in order to assure the proper tone, it must be tried on a piece of waste paper, and when this is determined, the sponge may be applied to the muslin; and, by this means, are procurable pure flat tints of the greatest delicacy, in blues and greys, for skies. With the aid of the sponge, we may obtain mere indications of color, which, in this kind of painting, are often desirable. A brush, in such cases, would either give too much positive color, or would be unmanageable with the very slight tint necessary.

Coarse honey-combed sponge, is used for another purpose—that is, for mottling, or dabbing the color on, in parts where a full, varied, uneven appearance is necessary. In luxuriant foliage, and broken and substantial foregrounds, great richness may be thus obtained.

The pulpy tints being mottled, or dabbed on with the coarse projections of the sponge, a great variety of tints are intermixed, by being thus wrought together, and over each other.

The first broad indications of foliage made out in this way, are worked into form at the edges with hog-hair or sable brushes.

The sponges, after use, are cleaned by being washed in a lather of soap and hot water.

Forms in foliage and foreground herbage are rapidly and effectively made out, by laying on varnish color, or color tempered with a mixture of japanners' gold size, and turpentine, in a rich, pulpy state, and allowing it to remain a short time, until it has partially set; that is, until the color so laid on in mass, has acquired a consistency sufficient to allow of forms being removed, or scraped out of it, with the scraper. This removal of color produces a light, the force of which must be regulated by the greater or less quantity taken away.

In the removal of color by scraping, to procure lights, a palette-knife may be advantageously used. It is held in the hand somewhat obliquely, and worked with freedom, drawing, as it were, with the knife. The manner of using it is shown in the engraving in our last issue.

The color must be tempered with japanners' gold size, and thinned with turpentine, a vehicle which causes the color to set quickly on muslin, and allows a rich, pulpy mass to be laid on. This is, indeed, a vehicle which may be used throughout the entire work, its strength being regulated by dilution with turpentine, more or less, as occasion may require. The quality possessed by gold size of setting the color, is of great importance in transparency painting. Its consistence enables lights to be taken out in a manner clear and sharp. This same substance prevents the color from running on the muslin, and admits of the color being laid on in a rich and full body.

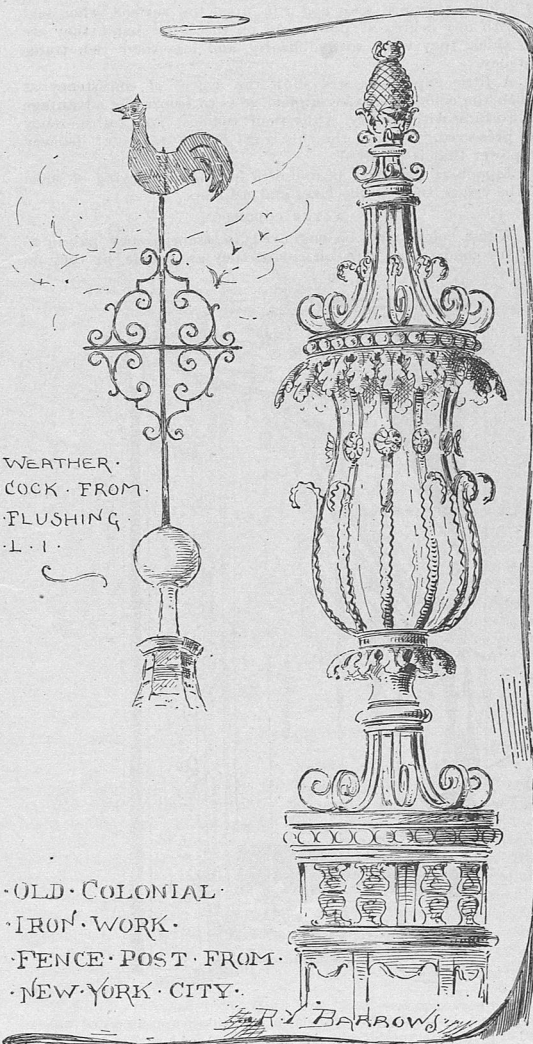
The mezzotint scraper used by engravers, is a convenient

tool to remove the color with sharpness from the linen. Slips of wood, also, cut in the form of a pointed knife, are useful when it is desirable not to remove too much color. The edges and points of these scrapers, can be formed according to the kind of work required of them. They operate according to their degree of sharpness or bluntness. The sharper they are made, the greater is the quantity of color they remove, and the more decidedly is it taken off, and *vice versa*.

One effective method of laying on broad flat tints of extreme clearness and delicacy, is this: form a small soft ball of cotton wool, or of a piece of old and soft worn silk, and having dipped the face of this ball into color sufficiently diluted with vehicle, and spread on the palette with the knife, apply the color to the muslin with a light touch. The manner of using this soft ball, is to rub lightly and evenly with it, taking up but little color at a time.

A sufficient quantity of wool, or silk, should be at hand, to admit of the renewal of the ball for every fresh tint.

The badger softener will be of great service to efface lines and irregularities in the color, left by the brush in passages where clean, flat tints, are desirable. In cases where it is necessary to soften extensive flat surfaces, a three or four inch set badger must be used, such as is employed by house decorators in the imitation of woods and marbles. But if a small surface,



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only, is to be softened, the small and round artists' badger tool will serve the purpose.

COLORS AND VEHICLES.

In this branch of art, the painter may choose between colors

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in two forms; that is, the finely-ground powder, or spirit colors, as they are called; or those ground in oil, and sold in tubes.

If the former are chosen, they must be rubbed upon a slab very smoothly, with oil or varnish. If the tube colors are used, they are ground ready for use, and require only to be mixed with the varnish vehicle, with which the work is to be executed.

Except for one or two of the finer and more expensive colors—such as carmine—the colors sold in tubes will be found most convenient.

The materials composing the vehicles, are copal varnish, japanners' gold size, oil of turpentine, and pale drying oil. The two latter, mixed in equal proportions, gelatinize, and form the well known substance called megilp, which is extremely valuable to mix with the oil colors, as communicating to them a pulpy transparency, and a certain body, which prevents their flowing, or spreading on the muslin.

But if megilp be used in quantity with blues, or very delicate tints, it vitiates them by the yellow tone which it generally communicates. For such colors, a mixture of copal varnish and turpentine is to be preferred.

Megilp, copal varnish, and turpentine may be combined in various proportions, according to the judgment and experience of the artist. A very few trials will suffice to show the proportions in combination best suited to produce the effect desired.

The colors may be tempered with any of these vehicles, so as to bring them into a rich, pulpy state. If too much thinned by vehicle, they are poor and run upon the surface, when laid on with any degree of power. If, on the other hand, they are too thick, they work with difficulty, and lose their rich transparency.

A little experience will show the degree of consistency at which the colors are to be applied, so as to secure the advantage of working with facility, while their richness and transparency are preserved. In this, the rule must be the degree of delicacy or power that is required.

Japanners' gold size is useful in forcing the drying of some of the colors, such as the lakes and madders.

WATER COLORS.

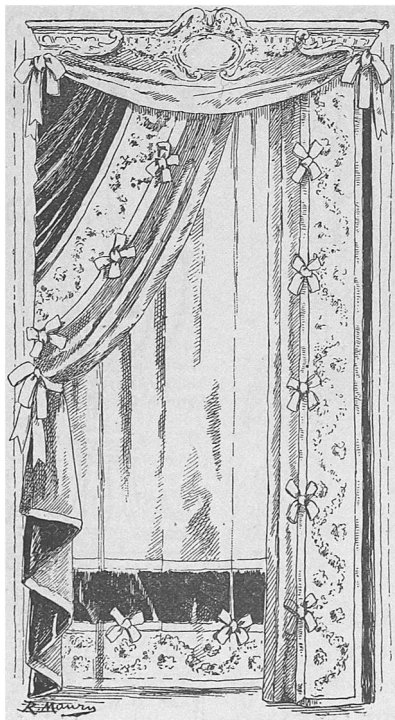
Water colors may be employed in transparency painting: but, in comparison with oil colors, they are feeble, as they do

The most convenient form of water color preparation is that of the moist color sold prepared in tubes.

In painting with water color on muslin, a certain degree of care is necessary, in order to avoid injury to the surface from absorption of the moisture through the size into the fabric. It will be necessary to employ them with a vehicle composed of a solution of gum tragacanth, of the consistency of cream, which



WINDOW DRAPERY IN LOUIS XIII STYLE.—Sides and canopy of white silk with gold stars. Top and curtains of green velvet. Loops and tassels in green and gold.



WINDOW DRAPERY.—First curtain in gold silk gauze, decorated with a band of plush in Japanese blue, embroidered in gold and blue. Second curtain, one part of Japanese blue plush, the other of gold gauze; knots of Japanese blue satin.

not, by any means, afford tints so bright and powerful as oil colors mixed with varnish media. But although not so valuable as colors ground in oil, they are, nevertheless, to a certain degree serviceable and effective.

will set the color on the surface, and, with ordinary care, will prevent its spreading or running.

A starch mixture is sometimes used, but the gum tragacanth is to be preferred.

COLORS.

From the very nature of this kind of art, it will be understood that suitable colors will be those of which transparency is the essential property; indeed, they are known as transparent, or glazing colors, and comprehended in the

Yellows—raw sienna, gamboge, Indian yellow, yellow lake, Italian pink. *Reds*—carmine, crimson lake, madder lakes. *Blues*—Prussian blue, Antwerp blue, Indigo blue, cobalt blue, French ultramarine. *Orange*—burnt sienna. *Greens*—terre verte, verdigris. *Purples*—purple lake, burnt carmine. *Browns*—Vandyke brown, asphaltum, madder, brown pink. *Blacks*—lamp black, ivory black.

This list comprehends all those of which the most powerful effects are obtainable, by employing them with resinous varnishes. In transparency painting, white is not used, as every degree of light and whiteness is procurable by the passage of light through the thin fabric of the muslin. The higher series of colors comprises the yellows. Of these named, it may be convenient to observe that gamboge, and yellow lake, afford the palest tints. Indian yellow, and Italian pink, furnish rich, golden hues; and raw sienna supplies a tint of a lower and more sober character. Of the reds, madder lake affords the purest, and most delicate rose tint; and crimson lake gives a strong rich tint, that may be modified from the lightest indication of color, to the richest and most powerful effect. The qualities of the well-known pigment, carmine, will be at once appreciated. The natural splendor of the color, may be enhanced by the production of a scarlet of gorgeous lustre, by first laying a flat tint of rich yellow, and when dry, glazing the carmine over it, and this is nearest, and almost the only approach to scarlet that can be effected by means of transparent colors.

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The opaque reds as not allowing of the transmission of light, appear brown and dirty.

OF THE BLUES.

Prussian and Antwerp blue are the most transparent, and in most cases they will be found generally serviceable, either for pure or mixed tints, as greens or purples. Indigo, in consequence of its intensity, must be used with great discretion; though this quality, which it is so necessary to guard against, is occasionally very useful. Cobalt and French ultramarine afford pale, delicate, and clear aerial blues, which may be strengthened into full bodied tints of great richness. Orange tints are mostly produced by mixture of reds and yellows, which afford an endless variety. Burnt sienna, however, is invaluable not only on account of its own natural color, but for the sake of the rich, sombre greens it produces, in combination with the blues.

Like the orange tints, the greens, also, are chiefly derived from the mixture of the blues and yellows, which afford a variety of every quality of hue. It is, however, usual to qualify their raw brilliancy in landscape, flower, and other subjects, by a slight addition of red, or crimson or madder lake, which sobers them to a tone more nearly approaching the rich and harmonious hues of nature. There are, however, two green pigments extremely useful; these are terre verte and verdigris. The former, used in a diluted state, supplies pale, neutral greens of great value in landscape and flower subjects. The brilliancy and transparency of verdigris, exceeds any similar qualities produci-

it is desirable entirely to exclude transmitted light: for this purpose, lamp black will be found the best.

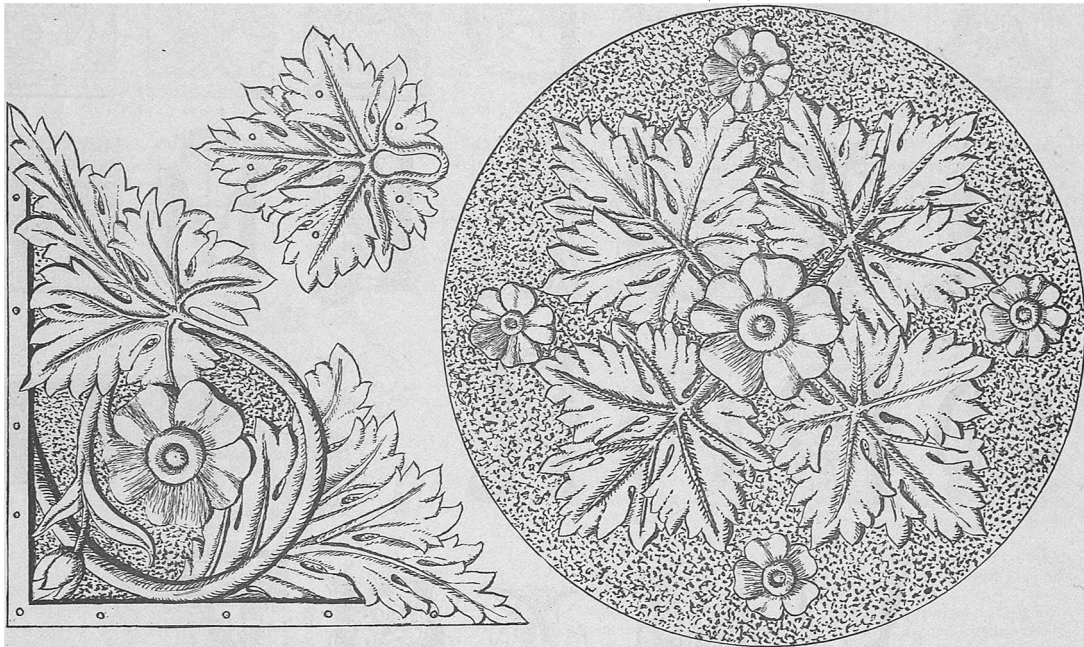
COMBINED SURFACES.

Pleasing and curious effects are produced by the use of two surfaces of fine and very transparent muslin, strained on separate frames, one being fixed at a small distance behind the other. On the front surface is painted all that is required to be seen, in the boldest and clearest relief. The painting on the surface behind, is modified in its effect, by being seen through that in front of it.

The sky and distance being seen through two transparent surfaces have their tints modified and softened, inasmuch, that a surprising aerial effect is obtained. The objects also, on the second surface, being seen through the first, maintain their tone of middle distance, and the boldness of the foreground objects on the front surface, secures for the combined subject a powerful and truthful appearance.

In Germany, sometimes, three surfaces are used to produce one subject. If it be a landscape, the foreground, with all the near figures, are painted on the front surface. The second, or middle surface, is occupied by the middle distance, and all objects belonging to it, and on the third and last surface, are represented the extreme distance and sky.

By such arrangements, very successful effects of moonlight, of winter scenery, and of fire, are obtainable. In some instances, portions of the middle and back surfaces are cut away, in such



CORNER, SCUTCHEON AND CENTER IN REPOUSSÉE, BY LILY MARSHALL.

ble by mixture of blue and yellow; and this color is most valuable in ornamental designs, from these peculiar properties.

The purples are mostly derived from mixture. Reds and blues in combination, yield almost every necessary tint. Nevertheless, burnt carmine, and especially purple lake, possess a clearness and richness, which render their employment eligible. Purple lake is principally valuable as a shadow color not only to the brighter reds, but to low toned greens, and also to brown, with which it imparts great richness. Vandyke brown is useful where brown of a pure and positive character is required. This color may be used from the palest indication of tint, to a degree of force almost approaching opaque blackness.

Asphaltum possesses similar properties, but it is somewhat difficult of manipulation, and requires some discretion in use, as it is liable to crack if used in its strength.

Madder brown is extremely rich in tint, and may be used for purposes similar to those for which purple lake is employed. Brown pink may be considered a rich olive green, rather than a brown. It is invaluable in foliage, and in all combinations for the production of rich, warm greens, to the lighter degrees of which it supplies a fine shade tint. The blacks are used chiefly for borders, or for strong and decided outlines, and parts whence

forms as will admit of light being thrown on particular spots on the front surface, in order to secure at those places the highest points of brilliant light.

Thus, in employing two surfaces, we may, by cutting from one, or both surfaces, the quantity corresponding with the extent of the light, throw a bright light upon foreground figures, buildings, or other near object, and communicate to them a striking reality of relief and brilliancy. Moonlight scenes, with reflection on water, sharp bright lights on the trees and the ruined tower, all enhanced by the contrast of an expanse of sombre tone and shade, are subjects well adapted for this kind of treatment.

It will be obvious to the student, that transparency painting admits of a great extent of experiment, and consequent improvement, from ingenious mechanism; but the limits of this little Treatise, preclude any lengthened detail in this part of our subject.

It is, however, hoped that the suggestion offered, will serve as hints to direct the attention of those desirous of pursuing this branch of art, to many elegant and ingenious devices of which it is susceptible, and by which its illusions are rendered more perfect.

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DIORAMIC PAINTING.

The art of producing those wonderful effects, known as dioramic, stands in close relation with transparency painting. The most remarkable productions of this class were for many years to be seen at the Diorama, in the Regent's Park, where they never failed to elicit the warmest approbation of all who saw them.

Each of these paintings was exhibited with alternate effects of night and day gradually stealing over them. Effects of light were succeeded by others, occasioned by the decomposition or realization of form; as, for instance, figures appeared where the spectators had just before seen only seats, a deserted street, or interior, &c.; or they might behold a landscape, wherein rocks rolling from the mountains replaced the aspect as a luxuriant valley. Effects of moonlight and of fire were also produced with inimitable truth and power.

To realize these dioramic effects, the linen is painted on both sides.

In such case, therefore, whether the subjects be illuminated by reflected or refracted light, one indispensable essential is the employment of a linen which is extremely transparent, and

The manipulation is exactly the same as in water color painting, with the difference only that the colors are prepared with oil, instead of gum, and applied with turpentine, instead of water.

From what has been already said with respect to opaque colors, it will be obvious to the artist that he cannot use white or any other opaque color in coats, as in the second effect; this would occasion spots, more or less tinted, according to the greater or less degree of capacity.

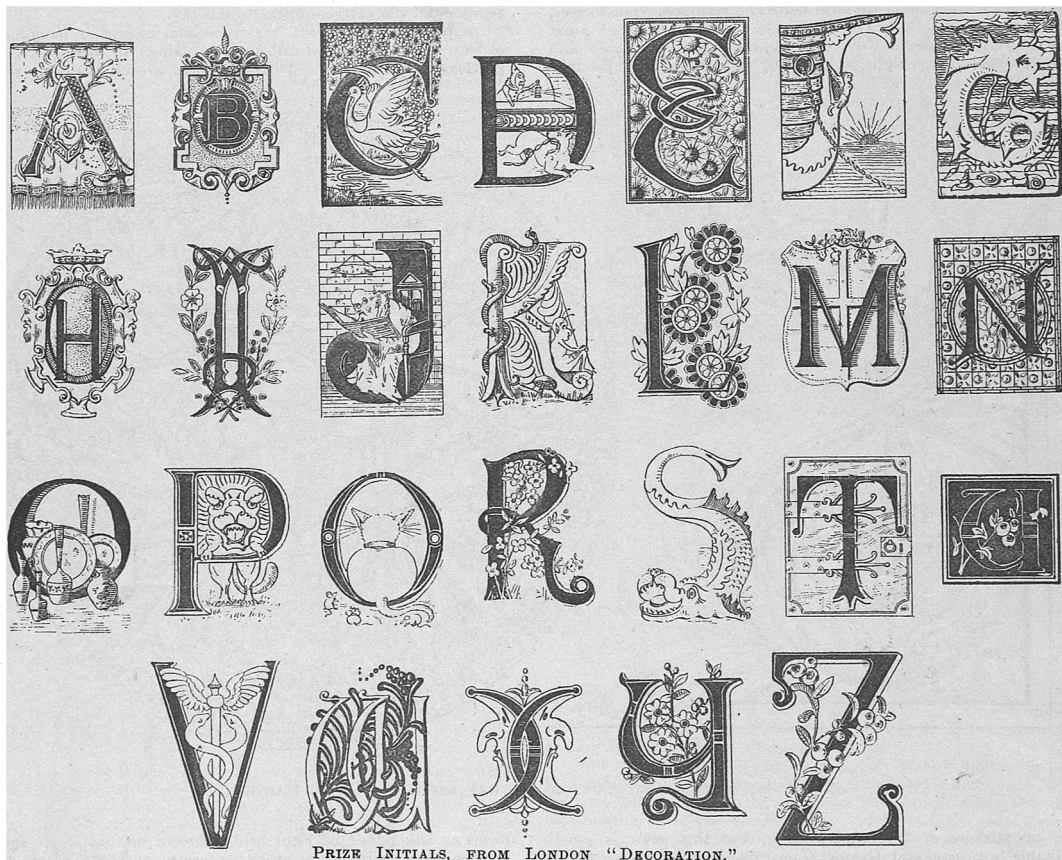
It must be the study of the artist, to produce the effects he desires by one stroke of the brush, as repeated working upon an effect injures the transparency of the canvas.

The Second Effect.—The second effect is painting on what may be called the wrong side of the canvas.

In the execution of this part of the work, the artist must employ no other light than that which passes through the canvas from the front of the picture.

By such a light, the transparent forms of the first effect are seen, and these forms must either be preserved, or painted over, according to the proposed effect.

The first process in the painting, is a wash of some trans-



PRIZE INITIALS, FROM LONDON "DECORATION."

having a texture as equal as can possibly be obtained. Either lawn or calico will be found suitable.

These fabrics must be procured of the greatest width that they are manufactured, in order that seams may be avoided, as these are always difficult to conceal, especially in the principal lights of a picture.

When the cloth thus selected is stretched, it is necessary to prime it on both sides with at least two coats of parchment size.

The First Effect.—The first effect, which ought to be the clearer of the two, is executed on the right side of the canvas.

The sketch is made in black-lead, taking care not to sully the linen; the whiteness of which is the sole resource possessed by the artist for bringing out the lights of the picture, for white cannot be used in executing the first effect.

The colors are ground in oil, but laid upon the canvas with turpentine, to which is sometimes added a little animal oil, but only for deep shadows; and these latter may be varnished without injury.

parent blue, which is laid over the entire canvas.

This wash, like the other colors, is prepared in oil, and laid on with turpentine; after which, the marks of the brush must be effaced by a badger hair tool, or softener.

This coating of color will, to a certain extent, conceal the seams, if it be laid along the selvages, which are always less transparent than the rest of the cloth.

When this coating is dry, the alterations intended to be made on the first effect, are sketched out.

In the realization of this second effect, the artist has nothing to do beyond modelling in light and shade, without reference to local color, or to the colors of the first effect, which are seen by transmitted light as transparencies.

This second picture is executed with a grey tint—a mixture of white and lamp black—the strength of which must be regulated by testing it on the blue wash on the other side, and then examining it from the right side of the picture, where it will not be at all perceptible, if it be of the proper strength.

Gradations of tone are procured by the greater or less degree

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of opacity in the tint. It may happen that shaded passages of the first effect, interfere with the realization of the second; but in order to remedy such inconveniences, and to countervail these strong shades, their power may be neutralized by using the grey of a degree of opacity equal to the strength of the shadows which it is intended to supersede.

It will occur to the artist, that it will be necessary to urge this second effect to its utmost power.

When the general effect of light and shade is finished on these principles, and the desired effect is obtained, the picture may be colored, but only with most transparent tints prepared in oil.

THE LIGHTING-UP OF THE PICTURE.

The first effect painted on the light, or front part of the canvas, is lighted by reflection; that is to say, by a light proceeding from the front, while the second—that painted on the wrong side—is lighted by refraction, that is, from behind.

In the event of any modification being necessary to any portions of the pictures, these may be effected by the employment of both lights simultaneously on the pictures.

The light by which the painting on the front of the canvas is seen, should come from above; but that by which the second effect, that painted behind, is seen, should come from the vertical openings, it being always understood that these are to be completely closed when the first effect is shown.

If it happen to be necessary to modify any part of the first picture, by the light properly belonging to the second, that is, coming from behind, then this light must be enclosed so as to fall only on the proper place.

The windows, or apertures, ought to be distant from the paintings at least seven or eight feet, in order to facilitate the modification of the light, and the communication of color, by its transmission through colored media, according to the effects or qualification it may be necessary to give to the subject.

For the first effect, or front picture, the same means is necessary.

All the substances used in painting are colorless. They only possess the power of reflecting this or that ray of light, which in itself contains all colors.

The more pure these substances are, the more decidedly do they reflect the simple colors: never, however, by any absolute

pictures (though in these works there are only two effects represented, one of day, by lighting in front, the other of night, by lighting behind,)—these effects do not pass the one into the other, without a complicated combination of the media which the light has to traverse, so producing an affinity of other illusions, similar to those which nature presents in her transitions from morning to night, and the reverse.

It is not necessary to employ media in intense hues, in order to obtain striking qualifications of color, as often a slight shade in the medium suffices to effect a great change.

From the principle of dioramic art, according to which, the most powerful results are obtained by a single decomposition of light, the importance of observing the aspect of the sky will at once be understood, when we would appreciate the tone of a picture, the coloring matters of which are subject to decompositions so extensive.

The best light for this purpose is that from a pale sky; for when the sky is blue, this coincides with the hue of the picture, and hence the cold tones are most powerfully brought out; while the warm tones remain ineffective.

These media are not present; they are reduced comparatively to neutral tints by the blue medium of the sky, which is so favorable to the cold tones of the picture.

When the sky is colored, the warm tones on the contrary, prevail; the reds and yellows come forth too vigorously, and, overpowering the colder tones, vitiate the harmony of the composition, or it may be give to it a character quite different from that intended, by substituting a general warm tone, for a system of cold colors.

It will thus be understood from these observations, that uniform intensity of color cannot be maintained from morning to evening.

We may even venture to assert it to be physically demonstrated, that the appearance of a picture cannot be the same at all hour of the days.

This is perhaps one of the causes which contribute to render good painting so difficult of appreciation.

By the changes in the aspect of the sky, which take place between morning and evening, painters are misled as to the real appearance of their pictures, and incorrectly attributing these apparent alterations to other causes, are betrayed into false color; whereas, in reality, the change is only in the medium—that is, the light.

TREATMENT OF ARGEMONE DESIGN FOR VASE.

THE Argemone resembles a single poppy while the leaves are armed with slender prickles very like thistles. It is often called Prickly Poppy. The flowers are white or yellow. If the yellow flowers are preferred, use mixing yellow shading with brown green used very thin. The stamens are a deeper yellow (jonquil) touched here and there with yellow brown for effect.

The leaves are a pretty soft light green color, which may be produced by mixing blue green with a very small quantity of moss green V. or grass green, just enough to give a greenish tinge to the blue. Shade with olive green. Some of the leaves may be painted with brown green, shaded with the same.

The pistils are a greenish yellow; mixing yellow and a touch of grass green, shading with olive or brown green will give the color.

Outline with brown No. 4 to 17 and deep purple mixed.

Sometimes it is troublesome to procure a good outline brush, but I have found cutting away the hairs close to the quill of a tracing or lining brush, makes a very good outliner.

If a background is desired the flowers being yellow, brown green, deep blue green and green No. 36 may be used. The colors rubbed down separately with turpentine and only mixed with the brush in laying in the background, giving an effect of varied tints in which the colors appear pure and in every variety of combination. Use three brushes, at first keeping each one with its own color; afterwards the colors may be blended where desired.

If the flowers are white a clouded background of mixing yellow and deep red brown or iron violet laid on very thinly, or carmine No. 1 and sky blue. These will give a light effect, while the green and brown background will give a dash appearance to the vase.

EVERY nation has some artistic qualities of its own born of natural aptitude and aspirations. By these the traditions of art, and more especially of artistic industries, take a definite character if genuinely carried out. Shall we ever be enabled to rival those masses of splendid material in glass which Venice in her zenith of prosperity turned out—jewel-like in color and containing something like crystal light within. In glass staining we are equal to the production of the secondary colors, but not the tertiary colors of the Mediæval age.



or independent property, which, by the way, it is not necessary they should do, in order to represent the effects of nature.

To explain, then, the principle on which dioramic paintings are executed, are lighted up, take, as an example, the effect produced when light is decomposed; that is to say, when a portion of its component rays is intercepted.

Put upon the canvas two colors, the brightest possible, the one red, the other green, both, as nearly as may be of the same degree of intensity.

Now interpose a red medium, as a colored glass, in the stream of light which falls upon them. What happens? The red color reflects the rays which belong to it, but the green becomes black. Diversify the experiment, by the interposition of a green glass, and the result is reversed; the green color yields its proper reflection, the red, in its turn, becomes black.

These results, however, are not perfect, unless the interposed media excludes all rays but their own, a condition not easily obtained, as colored media rarely have the power of excluding all but one ray.

The general effect, however, has been sufficiently proved.

To consider this principle in its application to dioramic